

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] For a more complete understanding of the present invention, and the advantages thereof, reference is now made to the following descriptions taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which:

[0011] Figures 1 through 7 show cross-sectional views of a prior art method of patterning a bottom electrode of a magnetic memory cell at various stages, wherein the soft layer of the magnetic stack is deposited over the bottom electrode layers prior to patterning the bottom electrode layers; and

[0012] Figures 8 through 14 illustrate cross-sectional views of a magnetic memory cell at various stages of fabrication in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention, wherein the bottom electrode is patterned prior to the deposition of the soft layer of the magnetic stack.

[0013] Corresponding numerals and symbols in the different figures generally refer to corresponding parts unless otherwise indicated. The figures are drawn to clearly illustrate the relevant aspects of the preferred embodiments and are not necessarily drawn to scale.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ILLUSTRATIVE EMBODIMENTS

[0014] The making and using of the presently preferred embodiments are discussed in detail below. It should be appreciated, however, that the present invention provides many applicable inventive concepts that can be embodied in a wide variety of specific contexts. The specific embodiments discussed are merely illustrative of specific ways to make and use the invention, and do not limit the scope of the invention.

[0015] The present invention will be described with respect to preferred embodiments in a specific context, namely a MRAM device. Embodiments of the present invention may also be